

TRVTH  
AND ERROR  
DISCOVERED  
IN TWO SER-  
MONS IN S<sup>t</sup> MA-  
ries in Oxford.

By ANTONY WHITE Master of Arts  
of Corpus Christi Colledge in Oxford.



OXFORD

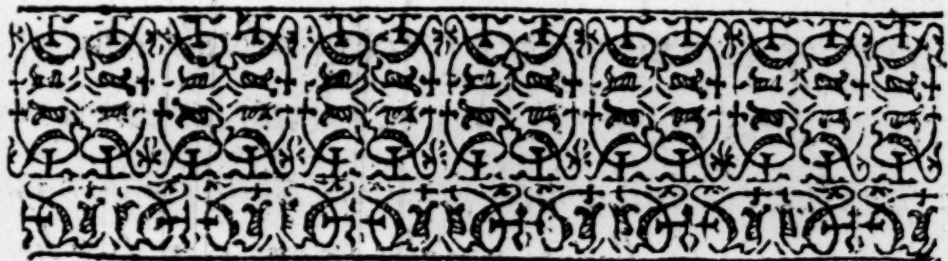
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THE  
D. E. R.  
CO. V.  
TWO  
MAY 1901

OXFORD  
The  
May 1901





TO  
THE RIGHT  
WORSHIPFVLL Sr

HENRY NEVILL OF  
PILLINGBERE IN

*Berks his much honou-  
red Patron.*

*Sir*



HE life of man is  
a continuall war-  
fare, both against  
vices that assault  
the will, and errors  
which inuade the  
vnderstanding. A-  
gainst these eni-  
mies of the soule  
doe those sermons serue; especially the latter,  
whose

whose chiefe employment is, to weaken error by cutting of the auxiliary forces which bad affections lend it, what service I haue herein done to the church and truth (which done by so raw a souldier in so short a velitation can bee but small) I bring vnder your view, and the like curteous eyes of those to whom you shall please to shew it. I should much feare the exactnesse of your iudgement, did I not know it tempered with that candor which vseth well to accept the honest endeavours of the weakest. In this assurance I leaue you to the reading of these following sermons, resting alwaies

Your Worships in my  
best services

ANTONY WHITE.





PROV. 23. VER. 23.

*Buy the truth but sell it not.*



**I**T were as fruitlesse a diligence for a Divine in writing of this nature, as this excellent book of Prouerbs is, to enquire out methodicall connexions of sentences, as it were for an artist to study the coherences of *Bedes axiomes*: Not therefore to trouble you with anxious prefaces this way let it suffice you (men, fathers, and brethren) that our royall Preacher doth in this verse commend to his studious hearers, a commodity fittest for humane nature to desire and enioy, *Truth*: concerning which, his advice hath two branches, one in tearmes *affirmatiue*, it is to bee bought, the other in *negatiue*, it is not to be folde; of the first whereof hoping that the God of truth will assist me, and presuming that your loue of truth will accompany me, I purpose for to speake.

A

where



Cicero in Lu-  
culla.

Vide Laet. lib. 3.  
cap. 6.

Aug. lib. 2. con-  
tra Academicos

Where first I must with *Solomon* take it for granted, that there is a *truth*, and that it may bee *bought*. For I hope I am not come amongst those *Academists* of whose schoole, those in *Cicero*, with *Cicero* himselfe were, who with an incongruous confidence deliuer, that there is nothing of whose truth we may bee confidently assured. *Laetantius* answeres this folly wittily: *Si nihil omnino scias, id ipsum nihil posse sciri, tollitur*: if no truth may be knowen, why would they haue that passe for truth that nothing can be knowne. Nay whereas it is their ambition to confute the opinions of all other men as false, how can this be without a secret profession of some truth, for what can giue the foile to falsehood but truth? Besides whereas they allow some *verisimilitude*, herein they confesse a *truth*, vnlesse which *Austen* laughs at, they will professe that what they see is the likenesse and purtrature of that which they neuer saw.

This ancient fancy hath not yet giue vp the ghost euen in our daies; nor will, as long as there remaines in the world, so much ignorance, lazines, iealousie, pride, prophanes for each of these lend somewhat to this opiniō: an *ignorant* mā lead by the examples of those many things which he is not able to comprehend, concludes in hast that nothing may be cōprehended; as if nothing were to be bought, because through his blindness hee sees nothing in the market. The *lazy* one, quickly weary of the search of truth, impatient of any longer labour, rests contented with the first appearances of things, and giues

vp

vp the verdict to his shallow iudgement that there is in euery point well nigh equall probability, but no pressing certainty. The *iealous* person casts his eye vpon the dissenting varieties of Doctrines that are in the world, and yet alleagerly defended by learned Patrons: hee obserues that what one cries vp for an holy truth, an other cries downe for blasphemous error, that both sides with confident asseueration produce and plead their euidences, and withall, that princes and rulers of the earth doe equally serue their turnes, with either doctrines to manage their affaires, herevpon he is suspitious that there is no constant verity in whatsoeuer is proposed, but that it is for politique ends only, that men haue auouched this or that for truth: or it may bee, because he findes by some experience that those vpon whose iudgments he hath relyed, haue sometimes deceiued him (though this were his owne fault to take things soe ouerhastily vpon trust) yet to ease himselfe, he will vnadvisedly complaine of that great vncertainty that is in all things, thinking it best for the time to come rather to suspend his assent, then venture a new cosening: the vpsot of all is this, that he will be so bablish, as because there is much deceit and sophistication in wares therefore he will conculde no wares are good, or therefore he will buy none: The *contentious* man, who in the pride of his wit glories that he is able to gaine say whatsoeuer any shall averre for true, (for there wanted not an\*odde fellow that would crosse you if you said the snow is white) hee at last comes

*Anaxagoras.*



Aquinas 1.2.22.  
q.1. art. 4.

Vide Arist lib.  
1 de moribus  
ad Eudemum,  
Lib. 1. Rhetor.  
cap. 5.

Ps. 85. 11.

Dan. 12. 4.

to be so farre transported in opinion as to thinke there is nothing but opinion, which you well know falls short of certaine knowledge, and is as the schooles speake alwaies *cum formidine oppositi* with some *suspicion* that there may be falshood in it. Lastly there will neuer be wanting the *Impious* person, who to finde some shelter for his irreuerence to God, & good things, his greatest enemies, he will as farre as his prophane witte can helpe him, call in question even the first and best knowne truths; to which improbous labour I suppose hee much forceth himselfe, knowing how much it might concerne him, that there were no God to punish his villany, no immortality of that soule, no resurrection of that body, that must bee reserued for eternall torments, nor any rule of that goodnesse by which he must one day bee iudged: but these vnworthy conceits are as (more then my hope is) farre from any of you my beloued bretheren, who haue learnt in the schoole of *Aristotle* (herein well deseruing of humane nature) that euery man hath in him that which is accommodate to truth, and that hee is not denyed the finding out of many certainties, nay you haue beene taught in a higher schoole, that *truth* (the noble plant that came downe from heauen) *shall spring out of the earth also as Dauid sings*, and that *many shall runne too and fro, and knowledge* (knowledge not meere opinion) *shall bee increased* as speaketh *Daniell*. But this will better appeare when I shall somewhat open the kinde & nature of that truth whereof our author here treateth. *Solomon* who wrote so many bookes



bookes euen to *wearinesse of flesh* giues this as the *Epitome* of all, *Feare God and keepe his commandments*, which being the *whole duty of man*, may well be thought the chiefe scope of those writings wherein he hath preached to posterity: more particularly, for this booke of his *parables*, hee salutes his reader in the very entrance with a discouery of his full drift, which is, *that men should know wisdom and instruction, and that they should perceiue the words of understanding*, now the vnderstanding he promifeth, is not (as we may well suppose) only of earthly and worldly things, which wee can all well and soone enough finde out without the helpe of so great a teacher, but of those better, higher matters, belonging to the seruice of God the tranquillity of soules, and the wellfare of all societies, in that great house of God, the world. It remains then that the *truth* here spoken of, should finde an interpretation agreeable to the maine scope of the author and consequently import the true knowledge, which appertaineth to the *true worship* of the most true God, in whose right seruice, stands the whole duty and felicity of man; Following then this sense, as knowing none other to follow, I must a little resume my former obseruation, that *Solomon* supposeth there is such a true knowledge in diuine matters, and that we may bee possessors thereof, for why should we be set to buy that which is not, and to what purpose is it, if it may not be bought? herein wee haue the more sober *scepticks* of our age somewhat yealding and

Eecl. 12. 13.

Prov. 1. 2.

*Vide Mont. eff.  
lib. 2. cap. 12.  
& Charr. de la  
sag. lib. 2. cap. 2.*

*Mal. 1. 6.*

*lib. 3. cap. 10.*

*lib. 1. de legibus.  
Vide Purch.  
pilgrimag.  
passim.*

plyant. For *Montaigne* and *Charron* those two *French* writers that call for such a suspence of iudgments, almost in all inferiour things, allowing vs rather to cheapen then buy: yet they willingly grant divine verities, which when reuealed from God, we must with ready submission assent vnto, as vnto vncontrbleable truths. But whether our *Pyrronists* euen in faith, will grant so much or no, wee will confidently auerre it vpon these grounds. First wee confesse God to be our father and Lord: now a sonne honoureth his father, and a seruant his Lord, as the Prophet *Malachy*, but not only by the spirit of prophecy (as I take it) but following herein the very light of nature well inferres. For there cannot be a closer sequence then of these termes: *pater, filius, obsequium, dominus, seruus, hominum*, obedience is due from the sonne to the father, homage from the tenant to his Lord. If then at the very instant of our being, that bill was drawne whereby we stand obliged to God, it is necessarily requisite, that there should be some certaine rule of that worship which wee owe to him, and that we should be acquainted with it. Our very nature confirmes vs in the acknowledgement that such a truth is likewise to bee found. For as *Lactantius* well shewes, euen by the testimony of those, who saw nothing but by the twilight of nature, man is naturally inclined to some religious conceits. *Philosophers* haue differenced him from all other creatures by this inclination, so that indeed, as *Cicero* long agoe obserued, and our late nauigations haue plentifully dif-



discovered, there is not any so wild a portion of mankind which doth not serue some deity, struing to content it with those kinds of worships which they hope will be accepted. Is there then this propension of all to some religion, & is there no religion which may truly satisfie it? Why is our vnderstanding desirous of the knowledg of an infinit truth, if it be not capable thereof, why capable, if there be no way to enioy it? Why doth our will not stay it self vpon any finite object, but is still pressing forward to an infinit goodnesse, if there be no certaine course to bee made partakers thereof. I will first beleeue that God giues, and our nature receiues so admirable a property in vaine, before I can be perswaded that there is no true religion, which only is that which can giue rest to these restless appetites of our soules. *Adde* in the last place that man, a creature of one of the highest formes (for he is but little inferiour to the Angells) should bee one of the foolishhest and most wretched, if religion were meerely but a name or fiction, or if hauing truth in it, could not, possibly be possessed by vs. For as *Ficinus* well shewes, many, as the *Apostles* forsake all things, all men something, out of the loue or feare of a Godhead: we quit present things in hope or dread of future, our consciences are continually exercised either in fasting our selues for the obserued, or vexing our selues for the omitted duty to that diuine power which we acknowledge: now if all this were vterly in vaine, we are most vaine and miserable, especially, since wee obserue in inferiour creatures no naturall

*De relig. Christi.*  
*cap. I.*



naturall disposition to abstaine from present good things in expectation of future, or carry themselves in such a voluntary strictnesse. We may not, who for want of time must bee faine to leaue out some thing necessary, stand too long vpon superfluous matters, & therefore will vpon the premises which even nature may subscribe vnto, conclude, that there is some where extant a forme of the true worship of God, whereof man may bee partaker. But the troublous dispute of the world is, what this true worship is, wherein it consists, where to bee bought, by what meanes to be purchased. Let mee hasten then to these points, not vnfit for this place, necessary I am sure for these times, wherein so many are at a stand which way to take, not a few haue turned their backs to that wherein they ought to haue proceeded: and all of vs (God pardon our coldnesse and faint-heartednesse) not so forward to vphold and beautify the truth which wee doe embrace.

The phrase of buying, here vsed, somewhat directs vs in our inquiry: for the law of this action is, that wee consider of the wares that are tendred vnto vs. Hee that would haue vs take things because offered, doth not sell but impose and tirannize. A man may safely suspect his dealing that would haue vs choose and winke, or buy in the darke. The basenesse of falshood shuns the light, but truth as *Tertullian* speaketh, *nihil erubescit nisi solummodo abscondi*, is ashamed of nothing but to be hid: it calles for all eyes, and feareth not the seuerest tryall; if it were

were onely gilded ouer, it might forbid touching or scraping, but being massy & solid gold throughout, the more you handle and examine it the brighter it will appeare. It cannot therefore be but a \**Turcisme* in the Church of Rome, which allowes not the people of God to try before they trust, but because she findes the ignorance of the most to bee her greatest reuenue shakels the soules of infinit numbers in the prison of a darke implicit faith, as if they could not be holy but in stupidity, nor good Christians vnlesse they turne beasts and bee led without reason: but shall we with such curious diligence, suruey the nature and conditions of those wares, that are commodious for the body, and shall we trust a few plausible words of the Chapman & goe no farther, in matters of that moment, as religion is, vpon the truth whereof dependes the saluation of our soules? Why? Is it not possible for men to be men and erre, are not many false prophets gone out into the world, are there not many falshoods for one truth, & doth not falshood at the first blush sometimes, seeme as truth? Was there neuer any rotten wood varnished or painted, was it neuer knowne that a strumpet put vpon her the attire and gestures of an honest matron? Now how shall all this fraud bee discovered, if wee will put out our owne eyes and not vse that discretion which God and nature hath left vs for the differencing of things. I confesse indeed that if we will resigne vp our selues, wholly to some others opinion and degrade our selues of our own vnderstanding,

*De Turcarum  
sententia vide  
Lod. Vivem de  
verit Christi.  
fidei lib. 4.*



\*Acts 17. 23.

1 Thes. 5. 21.

1 John. 4. 1.

1 Pet. 3. 15.

wee may fall vpon some truths in the worship of God, but this is by chance not iudgement, and is not much better then if we should againe build vp the \* *Altar to the unknown God*. To remedy all these inconueniences, let vs embrace the allowance of the blessed Apostles, of St Paule who exhorts vs *to try all things and hold that which is good*: of St Iohn who bids vs *not to beleue every spirit but try them whether they are of God*: of St Peter who requires, *that wee be ready alwaies to giue an answer to euery man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in vs*. This that wee may be able to doe, let vs goe on and shew the best meanes whereby wee may discern *truth* from *falsehood* in matter of religion.

Where first it is no reason why it should not easily be granted, that that is truth which beares conformity to the minde of the first truth, God: for our vnderstanding is no otherwise true, then as it is euen and adequate to things themselues, considering them as they are, nor are those Entitles true but as they are agreeable to diuine vnderstanding, which is not only the measure but the cause of all things, but if in any thing certainly in religion that is most true, that beares correspondency with Gods minde and will: for who should prescribe what belongs to his honour but himselfe? Shall man who knowes so little in and about himselfe? (especially since his vnderstanding grew crazie by his fall) attempt to define how his maker shall bee serued? The effect of this presumption, is too well known  
in.



in the superstitious, who measuring God by themselves, thrust such vnseemely kindnesse vpon him as are wholly vnworthy of his maiesty: yea (to speake the truth) worship their owne fancies instead of a deity: what an ilfauoured and mishapen peece of honour would it bee, which a silly country fellow should lay downe for the right service of our king, & may we not quickly imagine, what an vntoward forme of diuine worship, that would proue, which poore ignorant man, a worne & no man deviseth. No, no, let vs let God alone with his owne honour: he is best knowne how great he is to himselfe, and can surely tell vs what his will is, he cannot be deceiued because most wise, he will not deceiue, because most good. It is by the sunne that wee behold the sunne: it must be by God himselfe that wee can know God: and therefore for this point, wee may set vp our resolution with *Ambrose* in his epistle against *Symmachus*: *cæli mysteria doceat me Deus ipse, qui condidit, non homo qui seipsum ignorauit, cui magis de Deo quam Deo credam?* As for the mysteries of heauen, let God teach vs who made vs, not man who knowes not himselfe, concerning God whom should we better trust then God himselfe? That of *Saint Hilary* is of kinne to this, *concedamus cognitionem sui Deo: idoneus enim sibi testis est, qui nisi per se cognitus non est*, let vs leaue to God the knowledge of himselfe, and since he is not known but by himselfe, hee is fittest to be his owne witnesse, but let vs with attentivest reverence, marke the severity of God himselfe in the prophecy of his seruant

2. Epist. cont.  
*Symmachum.*

Lib. 1. de Trinit.

Es. 29. 14.

Mar. 15. 9.

De gub. munda-  
di lib. 3.

Ioh. 77. 17.

2. Pet. 1. 21.  
Greg. mag.

*Esay*, the words whereof his owne sonne repeates in the fifteenth of Matthew, *In vaine doe they worship me teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* Now since the conceit of man, is so vaine a measure of diuine worship, and that God must bee honoured after his owne way, it remaines to be but enquired where the leate of his will is \* *Saluianus* readily answeres vs, *ipsum sacra scriptura oraculum, Dei mens est, the oracle of holy scripture is the mind of God.* If it be truth we seeke for, *thy word O Father is truth* saith our *Sauour*. Behold the louing care of God to man; when by reason of our lame and blinde vnderstanding wee could not soare vp to God, to enter our selues into his acquaintance, hee hath descended downe to vs; by those who haue beene from euerlasting in his bosome, his deare sonne and spirit, he hath conueied vnto vs his counsailes, and by the men who spake and wrote as they were inspired, hath sent vs (as *Gregories* phrase is) diuerse *epistles* concerning his will: here then may we rest, that whatsoeuer his word enioineth, is well-pleasing, whatsoeuer it forbiddeth is vnacceptable to him, whatsoeuer is of a middle nature, it is vncertaine whether it may be wellcome; It is most certaine it is not expected. They are then too daring that thrust vpon the people of God, as necessary to their saluation or their makers worship, those obseruances, that we are sure are beside, they are not sure are not against this written word. If it were possible in these contentious times, for any one man of an humble and indifferent spirit, no more

to



to heare of those differences of religion, which so much troubles the world, then that good poore man in the story of \* *Alexander* did of those wars that had filled all *Asia* in his time, and had beene long round about him, before hee had diligently read ouer the holy scriptures, and if afterwards there should without all forestalling perswasions or Oratory inference be nakedly layd downe the articles of our doctrine and the tenents of the *Romish* Church, it were not possible but he should admire the sweet consent, which our religion hath with Gods word, and he would more then wonder from whence all the rest were fetcht, and would conclude that if what they teach in many points, be true, there hath crept into the world a new Gospel, whereof no footsteps in the many writings of the holy Prophets and Apostles doe appeare. These additaments are stiled sacred traditions, but by what chaine were they let downe from heauen? Or how can their necessary vse by prudent hearted christians bee embraced, when they are already bound to beleiue, *that the Scriptures are able to make vs wise vnto saluation* as Saint Paul saith, and *that they are of sufficiency for all those things, whereby the man of God may be perfectly furnished to euery good worke*: men may bee wise aboue that which is written, but then they are wise aboue sobriety; for it is a luxury in religion to desire more, then what will instruct vs to every good worke here and fit vs for eternall saluation hereafter.

But here wee must goe one step farther to quit  
B 3 that

*Vide Curtium  
in lib. 4.*

2 Tim 3. 15, 16  
17.

*Rich. de So vict.*

*Prov. I. 4.*

that obiection which good soules, doe many times make against their owne good; for they willingly granting that God hath made the scripture a perfect register of his will, and that it is a great contentment to man, that God himselfe is become his teacher, by whom if he bee deceiued he may say as he of old, *Si error è Domine a te decepti sumus, if I am in an error thy word hath deceiued me*; yet how shall these writings bee vnderstood by vs? For wee heare many and those none of the meanest clerkes, complaining of the great obscurity to be found in that booke, and how shall wee *Puifnes* and *Pigmes* in comparison of others reach to the sence thereof; buy the truth we would, but it is somewhat aboue the proportion of our states and abilities: to this I can giue no better answere, but doe yee with humble diligence and teachable affections read ouer this heauenly booke and you will answere your selues: for doubtlesse you shall finde many easy places therein, and those will incourage you to read the rest. Euen this writing of *Solomon* though it containe parables high enough for the most reaching vnderstanding, yet withall it certifies vs in the very \* entrance *that they are framed to giue subtilty to the simple, and to the young man knowledge and discretion*; and will the spirit faile of the end proposed? Experience will teach vs otherwise, for howsoeuer we shall meete in scriptures with some of those depths wherein *Elephants* may swimme, and if they will bee too curiously and presumptuously venturing, be drowned too; yet we shall also light vpon



vpon exceeding many foords, and those streaming likewise with the waters of life, wherein those that are yet but lambes may wade and be refreshed; admirable is the temper of holy scriptures, as the Author thereof takes care of all and is *rich to all that call vpon him* as speakes the *Apostle*, so is the stile thereof disposed and bending towards all, that approach with reuerence: it so exerciseth the wits of the most learned, as that it satisfieth the desires of the most ignorant: God is the Father and lord of vs all, and he speakes as becometh both those titles; for hauing differing children and seruants and hauing commandes for all of them, he must needs attemper his speech to each seuerall capacity, that e- uery one may know his duty in the place hee holds vnder him. Howsoeuer then the olde *Philosophers* favouring of the heathenish envy and pride, and mindeing onely the benefit of a few, professe they will write obscurely, and to the most as good as if they wrote not at all, witnesse the epistle of *Aristotle* to his greatest scholler, yet to conceiue so of God, the author of *mankind*, as well as of the *Bible*, were the impeachment of his wisdom and goodnesse: for what shall he be the God onely of *universities*, shall the witty onely ingrosse him? No, doubtlesse hee is a God of the \* *vallies* as well as of the *mountaines* & the showres of his gracious pleasures shall equally descend on both: there are in e- uery corner of his family soules sicke, and to be cured; hungry and to be fed; naked and to be clothed lost and to be found, and therefore there is doubt- lesse

Rom. 10. 12.

*Vide Vivem de  
verit. fidei lib.  
2. cap. de virtu-  
tibus evangelii.*

*Arist. epist. ad  
Alexandrum de  
libris physic.  
auscult.*

1. Reg. 20. 28.

Mat. 13. 14.  
2 Cor. 4. 4.

lesse in his word, that medicine, meat, succor, saluation, that shall bee fit for all, there is a spirituall market where all may buy: but heere is the folly, we are many of vs lazy, and then lay our sloth vpon obscurity of scriptures, and some of vs it may bee drunke with inordinate affections, and then like drunkards though the way bee broad and plaine inough yet we find fault with the narrownesse & vneuenesse; yea by the abuse of our selues and the word of God, instead of buying his truth wee purchase that his grieuous iudgement, *that seeing wee shall not see, and hearing wee shall not vnderstand,* that so that of the Apottle may bee verified: *if the Gospell bee hid it is hid vnto them that perish, in whom the God of this world hath blinded their mindes, that the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ should not shine vnto them.* Much fault may bee in our selues, that wee misse of so rich a bargaine as truth; but came wee with honest mindes to the word, we should finde, that though many hard things therein surpasse our vnderstanding, yet if we practise, but so many duties of piety, and embrace so many articles of faith, which wee may clearly vnderstand, there will remaine of easy lessons such store, as shall serue to the attainment of eternall life. Thus haue wee layd downe the prime and master direction how to descerne falshood from that heavenly truth which we would buy, shewing that nothing is to be retained as necessary to the true worship of God, which beares not conformity to his will, whereof the letters patents are the holy scriptures



tures; but further, because in the ware it selfe, which we would get into our hand, there are found certaine proper qualities or characters whereby it may be distinctly knowne from sophisticate falshoods, it will not be impertinent to admonish somewhat herein.

The first innate property of this truth, is that it is alway one and the same, euen as God himselfe the parent thereof is, *in whom is no variablenesse or shadowe of turning saith S<sup>t</sup> Iames*, as one Lord so one faith, is S<sup>t</sup> Pauls doctrine; to imagine that diuers and contrary traditions in religion may be true, is to bring in a plurality of Gods. For the one and simple vnderstanding of one God, cannot possibly cast forth the beames of two truths. Well then may *Austen* call that opinion of *Rhetorius*, *heresin nimium mirabilis vanitatis, an heresy of a prodigious vanity*, who held that all heretiques though of neuer so different fancies, did yet speake the truth, as if any thing could swarue from it selfe and remaine it selfe; no, no, truth is more vniforme and constant, insomuch that if we suruey all the parcels of this rich & beautifull commodity, we shall finde each seuerall to agree with the rest in admirable consent; whereas if wee take into our hands the infinite peeces of falshood, wee shall not onely perceiue them opposite to truth, but incoherent one to another, nay in the same cause or question it will not be hard to descry the premisses, and the more removed cōsequences mutually to wound one another and be both false; but truth cuts not her owne throat, but rather each part of her (if of

Iac. 1. 17.  
Eph. 4. 5.

Aug. de heres.  
cap. 72.

so partlesse a thing I may so speake) leads stron succour to the other.

Prov. 8. 2, 3.

Psal. 29. 1, 2.

The second native note of diuine truth is, that it still reflects it selfe vpon the glory of its Author, and therefore she, as wisdom in the booke of *Proverbs*, gets her to the *top of the high places*, shee stands at euery entrance and sings that *Psalme* with a chearefull voice, *Giue vnto the Lord O yee mighty, giue vnto the Lord Glory and strength, giue vnto the Lord the glory due vnto his name*: all her cry is that flesh and blood may be humbled, and the Father of spirits glorified: she bids miserable man at last know and acknowledge his misery, and begin to confesse himselfe altogether vnworthy of the least of his provoked makers mercy: she preaceth to him, not to stand vpon the prerogatiues of naturall goodnesse, shee counselleth him to cast away the insolent conceit of his owne merits and satisfactions, and rely onely vpon the free and vnderferued grace of God for his saluation: shee commandes him to submit all his owne wisdom, greatnesse, power, to the power, greatnesse, wisdom of God: she iniouines him not to take in any partners into his redeemers honour, but to let him haue all the glory of his owne workes without a sharer: this voice thus aduancing our creator and restorer, is high & true; but when I heare a skreaking, that I am not so poore but that doing what I may doe, by my depraued nature, I deserue at leastwise in congruity, that God should looke favourably vpon mee, & when his fauour is receiued, I then can doe those  
works



works which by their owne proper dignity, may merit heauen and bring God vnder a debt: when I heare a noife that I must get mee some of the ouerflowings of other mens goodnesse, or pay some of mine owne satisfactions to helpe out the merits of my saviour (as if there were some want in him of *whose fulnesse wee may all receiue grace for grace*) when I am sollicit in performance of religion, to doe besides and sometimes against the command of God, as if I might be a thought wiser then my maker: these sounds must needs bee vtuneable to truth, since they set not forth the grace and glory of God in that highest strain, which heavenly doctrines should reach vnto.

John. i. 16.

*Thirdly* if amongst a heape of fruitlesse & comfortlesse doctrines that vsually lye vpon the stall, we would finde out and buy the truth, let vs enquire after that which containes the most certaine and safe method of our reconciliation with God: for since religion (as that noble *Frenchman* hath it) *is the art of sauing man*, which cannot bee but in coniunction with God, and since it is confessed on all hands, that sinne hath made a great gulf betwixt God and man; that must needs bee the only truth, which will tell vs how a friendship may bee made vp againe betwixt the creator and his creature, hence some say *religion* takes his name, because it doth\* *relige* or binde together againe what was unhappily disvnited. But be that as *Grammarians* can agree, it will be agreed by diuines, that all mankind, should be vtterly lost, if being by sin brought

*Morneus de verit. rel. Christiane. cap. 20.*

\* *Vide Lactant. lib. 4. cap. 28. & Aug. de civ. dei. l. 10. c. 4.*

Rom. 5. 10.

vnto the very margent of that bottomles hellish pit, there should be no bridge appointed, to conueigh vs ouer in safety to the mercies of heauen, but herein the grace of God, (which the scripture hath the honour to publish helps by bringing vs certaine newes of an *Emmanuel a God-man, a mediator*, who by his infinitely meritorious sufferings (for what cannot the blood of the son of God obtaine) payd off all the scores of his Fathers iustice, extinguished all the fiery fiercenesse of his wrath and reconciled vs to his euerlasting loue, wherein is euerlasting life and health: *when we were enimies* saith the *Apostle, wee were reconciled to God by the death of his sonne, and being reconciled, we shall bee saued by his life.* This is a true saying and worthy by all meanes to bee receiued, because it can onely giue assurance of peace to our troubled consciences, whereas all other waies in the case of mans reconciliation with God, are but as thinne, rotten, short threads, applyed to the bowing of a mighty Cedar, to a poore shrubbe of wonderfull great distance from it, euen tyes and bandes weaker and vainer then vanity it selfe.

Iac. 3. 17. 1. 27.

Fourthly, it may passe for an indiuiduall marke of true religion, that it is a leader to true sanctity *The wisdom that is from aboue, is first pure?* saith *St Iames*, and in the last verse of his first chapter *hee giues this character thereof, charity towards others and cleannesse in our selues.* Not that all professors of the truth, are presently possessed with sanctity, not that the sanctity which is in the best, is in this life



life perfectly squared to the exact rule of truth; but our meaning is, that what is diuinely true doth in its owne nature necessarily tend to the purging of our soules from corruption, and the introducing of holy innocency, charity and euery other vertue: It must needs bee so, since truth is the daughter of God, the *Holy of holies*; when therefore we heare a doctrine that fauours our sensuality, that giues dispensation to carnall liberty, that lendes patronage to the fopperies of our time, *ut honeste peccare videamur*, that we may seeme honestly vaine; The voice thereof, bewraies the falshood of it, nay it is a very vnlucky truth (if any truth can haue that misfortune) which when entertained moues no man the more to the loue of God or practise of any goodnesse. In a word since it was wisely said, *Summa religionis est imitari quem colis*, it is the abrigement of all religion to imitate him whom a man worships: it is but froth, that is not able to imprint in our accompts the liuely resemblance of that holinesse which is in God. If it cannot beget vertue but serues only to make vs hide our badnesse, it hath but the force of an humane law; if it doe but onely pare off, but not root vp vices, it is but a lecture of heathennish philosophy: if instead of crossing, it gratifies the ill humours of the flesh, and world, it is the doctrine of diuells; but if it bee fitted to the rendring of a man, not onely a full renouncer of his owne lusts but a sincere imitator of his makers holinesse, this is the truth, that is fallen downe from heauen, to bring vs vp thither.

Aug.

Ioh. 4. 23.

Mat. 23. 25. 14.

Laſt. lib. 4. c. 3.

Fiftly I muſt adioiyn this, as a cogniſance of the beſt religion, that it calls eſpecially for the inward man: for nothing can be more agreeable to a ſpirituall and inuiſible nature, then a ſpirituall ſervice: *ſurely the Father ſeekes ſuch worſhippers*, as ſpeakes the ſonne, and I hope many ſuch hee will finde, though I cannot but feare there will bee ſtill more, who ſuppoſing that God loues, whatſoeuer they themſelues admire, & going about to put vpon him their owne humors, place all religion in externall gawdes and ſhewes, what a deale of mechannicall religion, is there in the world whileſt the *Phariſaical Jew* is buſy in the waſhing of his cupps, and platters, and makes his obſerued prayers long euen to hoarſneſſe, but to haue a cleane and ſincere ſoule is his leaſt care. The *blind heathen* playes the *Antique* in geſture before his God, and when his ceremony is ended, his religion is ended. The ſilly *Papiſt* with his fingers turnes ouer his beades, with his knees creeps to his image, with his tongue performs his confeſſors taſke, and then he hath done with God till the next holy day: nay whileſt ſo many amongſt our ſelues meere *Mimicks* in religion, are zealous rather in their eyes, eares, hands, tongues, then in their hearts, that finde all religion in the temple, and in the temple leaue it as they finde it, neither bringing in nor carrying away any in their mindes, which ſhould be the houely liuing Temples of God, beautified with modeſty perfumed with innocency, and ſtored with the ſacrifices of flagrant loue to God, his cauſes, his ſeruants:

ſeruices



seruices of the body were decent, haue their place, but not as distinctiue notes of a true religion, which rather calls for the offices of a good and well giuded minde.

Lastly I may not omit without wronging my wares, that the truth which must be bought, will be known by her antiquity and lastingnesse, because it is the offspring of him *that was, and is, and is to come*: heere those of the Church of *Rome* will bee ready to pleade a purchase, nameing vs *Popes* and auncestors for many yeares, in whose hands their doctrine hath bin kept, wee deny it not to bee too olde, and yet wee graunt it not to be olde inough: for antiquity hath its degrees; we yeeld the second, but the first is the best, and that is ours, wee say not this or that *Pope* but with *Ignatius Christ is our antiquity*; nor to vse *Cyprians Apologie*, doe wee so much attende, what any others before vs, haue done or taught, \* *sed quid, qui ante omnes est Christus prior fecerit, what Christ who was before them all did, and commanded to be taught and done*; and this truth which in the *Primitive* times was cleere-ly professed and in the darker daies of *Antichristi-anisme* preserved, both in the *Oracles* of the vncorrupted word, and in the hearts of persecuted witnesses, our eyes (eyes blessed if thankfull) behold it, not *new* but *renewed*, and vindicated from the tirannie of former times, if it had stood onely vpon humane props; fraudes and forces might by this time haue vndermined it, but by a higher hand, it hath hitherto miraculously continued, and no doubt

Rev. 4. 8.

Epist. ad Philadelph.

Epi. 63.

doubt will to the end of all things; since there is no reason why God who is if I may so speake as wise at first as at last, and as strong at last as at first, should either change his minde or not afford his support.

Having thus shewed where truth is shopt, and how it may be discovered the onely labour that is left mee, is, to stirre you vp to bee so affected that it may be possessed by you: where not to bee so arrogant as to chalke you out a way of study in arts and sciences, and languages, and such like helps, to the inquisition euen of diuine truths, this I leaue to the *Gamaliels* & maisters of the *Israell* at whose feet I wish I might haue longer sate. I shall onely accompt it my duty, to admonish you and my selfe in a few words of the chiefest *qualities* wherewith wee should bee inuested, who are inioyned to buy the truth.

Mat. 13. 46.

And here let a high loue and esteeme of this ware be first wrought in vs: for doubtlesse here is a thing of rich value before vs, since the holy ghost doth so sollicite vs to the purchasing thereof, wee may well giue it out, that this is that one *pearle of great price* mentioned in the *Gospell*, which caused the wise merchant to goe and sell all that he had and buy it, for if it be an excellency, drawing toward *Angellicall* perfection, to consider of things as indeed they are: if it be so sweet a food to the soule of man to contemplate of those matters whereof she is capable without mistakeing: if it bee the noblest schollership to copping out into our vnderstandings, that which is originally & eternally in Gods:  
if



if God bee so iealous of his honour, and so vnlike those sociable Gods of the heathen, that one only prescribed worship can content him; how should wee bee rauished with truth in which all this is found, wee cannot but long to buy it, if wee once bee thus perswaded of the worth of it.

Therefore I hope the next thing will bee heeded by vs, which is, as heartily to be affected with the excellency of scriptures, aboue all other writings, since in that holy paper is vnquestionably wrapt vp this heauenly ware; much time would then bee spent as was done by *Timothy in knowing the sacred letters*, and not suffer our selues to bee so bewitched with the name of humane polite literature, that *Philosophers, Historians, Poets*, yea and those *Diuines* too, with whom *Aristotle* is more frequent then *Paule*, should take vp our solemnest, and deuoutest studies, and the *Bible* bee onely read at some by houres, rather because we would not bee altogether ignorant, the that we would be very skill full in it: surely they are worthy to bee deceiued in diuine matters, who are infected with the humour of *Angelus Palitianus* who would not vouchsafe the reading of scriptures, as not containeing elegancies futable to his wit and stile, as if he meant to be saued by *Criticismes and quainter phrases*. *St Austen* bewailes this vanity of his, with whom whilest not conuerted *Tully* aboue all compares seemed worthier of his study, then any of our inspired authors, we may think it a malady of great wits

D

which

2. Tim. 3. 19.

Vide vinem de  
veri. fidei lib. 2.  
cap. de veter.  
Testam.

lib 3. cons. cap. 5

which had need to be cured by such repentance; let good wits therefore take heede of it.

Sap. 1. 4.

2. 81. 7.

Now as we loue truth and the records of it, so if we would store our selues therewith, I know nothing more necessary then to come with honest and purged affections: for a minde blurred with sensuall vanities, worldly corruptions, diuclish wickednesse, can hardly take the faire impressions of truth. *Into a malicious soule wisdom (as it is in the booke of Wisdom) shall not enter nor dwell in the body that is a subject vnto sinne,* If pride be the domineering sinne in vs, and hath giuen vs any of the *waters of strife* to drinke, Lord, how hard wee study, yet not to buy but disgrace a truth: if it hath bin our ill lucke to haue vented an errour, wee take it our credit to defend it, and though wee are conscious of the falshood yet wee must not seeme to erre: In our conferences which should serue to put vp truth before vs, it is victory that is onely aimed at. A modest man dares scarce speake what is true for feare of putting vs into the contrary error: and as the leauen of pride is so soure, so is it wonderfully swelling, as if plaine and certaine truths were *occupata materia*, a matter already taken vp by others of low and vulgar wits, and vnfit for the sublimity of our spirits: we range after curious speculations that still will runne away from vs, or if caught will bee of no vse: wee peremptorily determine where wee should onely religiously admire, againe, if this spirit haunt vs, a new error pleaseth vs better then an auncient established truth, thinking it a brauer act

to



to be the maister of a young vanity, then the disciple of an aged truth, no wonder then if some, now and then, picke out of their authors such a point for their venting, which others saw as well as they, and could haue bought it; but being but a toy and not worth the expence, haue wisely scorned it, these marketings can hardly bee avoided by men of pride, humility is more thirsty and still on the getting hand; because indeed blessed bee him, who as hee frustrats proud wits, so hath hee promised *that the humble he will teach his way.*

Luk. 1. 15.

Ps. 25. 9.

Now as the fate of pride is, so is that of worldlings, so is that of sensuality, so is that of enuy, so is that of vncharitablenesse; all these hang plummetts vpon the soule, & suffer her not to ascend vp to many truths; nay though our vnderstandings be sometimes of their owne naturall vigour soaring, yet as the very *Eagles* made for flight, can onely flutter, not mount when weighty stones are tyed to their feet; so these base and vnworthy affections cannot choose but clogge and presse vs, when wee are to raise vp our spirits to any high point: but did wee carry in our breasts, contented, chaste, moderate peaceable affections, indeavouring nothing more then, *to be holy as God is holy*, the eye of our soules would oft see more cleerely & pearce more deeply into heauenly misteries: that rule of our Sauour is most diuine: *If any man will doe the will of my father, he shall knowe of the doctrine whether it be of God.*

1. Pet. 1. 16.

Ioh. 7. 17.

Much here might bee added concerning those

Is. 24. 24.

Isaiah.

Isa. 11. 37.

Isa. 12.

Mat. 7. 13.

Ezek. 20. 18.

Mat. 7. 15.

Gal. 1. 3.

2. Cor. 1. 24.

many preiudices whereof wee should also rid our  
selues, before we can entertaine truth; it is true it is  
true, is the cry of many, but why, it is attended  
with signes: yea but *false prophets shall doe wonders  
euen to the deceiuing of the elect themselves, if that  
were possible*: it is confirmed by the sufferings of the  
professors: yea but 'tis not the *paine but the cause  
that maketh a martyr*: it is accompanied with pro-  
sperity: yea but the Apostles & that church where-  
in the faith was most purely kept, were *destitute,  
afflicted, tormented*: it is followed by multiudes, yea  
but it was neuer so well with the world *that the best  
thing should please the most: & the broad way heares  
ill*: it is bequeathed by our auncestors: *but walke  
not in the statutes of your fathers, I am the Lord  
saith God sometimes by his prophets*: it were ill with  
truth if a long custome could prescribe against it:  
it is taught by great *Rabbies*: but they list not to  
be men, nor euer could produce any character that  
exempts them from ignorance: it is deliuered by  
those of reputed sanctity: yea but our sauour men-  
tioneth false prophets *that shall come in sheepes clo-  
thing*: nor is I will not say a *counsell* of Saints but  
men, a *quire* of Angells to bee welcomed with any  
other curtesy then a *curse, if they bring things con-  
trary to what hath bin receiued from Christ*. I won-  
der at our sottishnesse that can bee patient to haue  
our vnderstanding giued by these weake preiudi-  
ces: that we may breake them, let vs be perswaded  
of this easy truth: that none but God can *Lord* it o-  
uer faith: because he alone is set aboue error and  
deceit



deceit: the *Apostle* saith it vpon deliberation what *David* did in hast, *euery man is a lyar*, what through Ignorance, what through negligence: what through malice; small reason haue wee then to prime our consciences vpon any ones sleeue, not knowing whether he will runne with them.

Rom. 3. 4.  
Pl. 116. 11.

To auoide all these impediments to the procuring of truth, let vs in the last place commend prayer vnto you: by which *holy* men haue confessed that they haue more profited then by reading, hearing, or any other diligence: for if it be true what *Elihu* saith, *there is a spirit in man, but it is the inspiration of the Lord that giueth vnderstanding*: and it being most true what our sauour hath, that *his Father will giue the spirit to those that aske him*; who can doubt but that devout prayer is one of the currentest coines, whereby wee may traffique with God, for the obtaining of those illuminations that shall bring truth with them into our breasts.

Aug. Epist. 112.

Iob. 32. 8.

Luk. 11. 13.

Thus haue I (reuerent Fathers and bretheren) brought you what I haue conceiued in this argument. I am not much acquainted with your eares and therefore know not how to fit them: onely I thought that a discourse of truth, and the purchase of it, might not be vsfutable to that place wherein is held so famous a *Mart* of truth: or did the considerations of mine owne meannesse deterre mee, since I knew I came amongst the wise, with whom as *Prospers* phrase is, *truth is not then onely great, when great ones teach it*. But if you will except, wee need no encouragement in this kind, for wee

Vide Prosp. praefat. in 2. l. de vita contemp.

haue bought truth already then I haue nothing to say but this, euermore defend it with your tongue and penne, and if need bee seale it with your blood: euermore adorne it with the holinesse, and integrity of your liues, that so when this life shall bee changed into a better, you may with soules full of truth the more comfortably come into the presence of the God of truth, to whom Father, sonne and holy ghost bee ascribed all glory and praise now & for euer.

*FINIS.*







JAMES I. VER. 16.

*Doe not erre my beloued brethren.*



If error were only the disease of the ignorant, it might reasonably bee said vnto me, *Physition beale thine owne country flocke*, & come not hither where various learning hath provided sufficient preseruatues against this euill, or if this malady of the soule, might be cured by a bare information of the vnderstanding the matter more conueniently might bee left to your publicke schooles, or priuate studies, then brought vp into your pulpit, but since experience abundantly teacheth, that the most dangerous, and troublesome errors haue had their birth, and breeding amidst the tongues, and pens, of men famed for their wit & learning; and since the affect-ions, ( which many times are as inordinate in the greatest clerks, as the simplest Idiots ) doe ( though very irregularly I confesse ) too too oft lead the vnder-

PROV. 23. 23.

*Errorem defini-  
re facilius quam  
finire Ang. lib.  
I. contra Acade-  
micos cap. 4.*

vnderstanding: I could not take it so misbeseeming a worke for a preacher, who hath so much to doe with the ordering of mens affections, to take in hand this subiect in this place, let mee then once more (Reuerent Fathers & beloued brethren) venture vpon your patience, and as heretofore I haue from that *wise king* invited you to *buy the truth*, so suffer mee now from this *holy Apostle* advise you to *fly error*.

*A thing* (if yet I can entitle it to *entity*) well worth our speediest flying from it, or chasing it from vs. For if wee define error, *which is sooner defined then finished* said *Licentius*, what is it but a pittifull deformity, & incongruity betwixt our vnderstanding, and the things which God and nature haue establisht? For as it is the iustice of truth to consider euery thing as indeed it is, herein nobly doing right to the first truth, God (the fountaine of that settled being which things haue) so on the contrary iniurious error is a false witnes-bearer against God, reporting otherwise of things, then God made them, or then hee would haue them to bee apprehended by vs; either fastning vpon things what belongs not to them, or denying to them what doth. Alas how haue we lost God, and the tracks of things as he hath left them to vs, yea how haue wee lost our selues, and the indowments wherewith wee were trusted! For whereas reason was bestowed vpon vs, to be a lamp whereby we might discern betwixt truth, and that which is the shadow thereof, error hath put out this light, and so depri-  
ued



ved vs of that which is *the soule of the soule* to vse *Philo* his words *even as the apple is the eye of the eye*. *Philosophers* speake of a naturall appetite which the soule of euery man hath to know what is true in things; & therefore howsoeuer there may be found thousands, that most gladly would deceiue others, scarce one among them would willingly be deceiued himselfe. Yet I know not how error hath somewhat dulled this appetite, I am sure it cannot satisfie it, but frustrates the honest desires of the soule; and instead of her due meate, feeds her either with incertaine opinions which breed crude, and vndigested tenents in the iudgement, or else with certaine falshood the very poyson of the minde. Nor is error only dangerous to the first harborers of it, but like the plauge, it runns from man to man; no man almost being content to erre to himselfe, but hath a longing to transmit his erronious conceits to others, as it appeareth in all Hereticks. But the malignity of error is neuer of greater force then when it lighteth into men of our calling, for when we haue once lost part of our priestly *pectoral*, our *urim* our light of true doctrine, and haue clad our selues in the darke hue of falshood, wee conueigh our fashion vnto multitude of soules, and cannot perish alone. By this you see the perrill, and cannot but welcome our Apostles admonition, calling you from it.

*But* then is an admonition in this kinde, so much the more to be heeded, the fouler the error is concerning which the warning is giuen. Such a one is

E

this

*De mundi opificio.*

*Exod 28.30.*

Heretic. Fabul.  
compend. de  
Simone.

Advers. hereses  
cap. 24.

this which Saint *James* meanes; for if you will sur-  
veigh the verses bordering vpon my text, you shall  
finde him labouring to root that impiously absurd  
conceit out of mens minds *that God is a solicitor  
and temptor to sinne*, The diuell greedy after the  
destruction of soules, was it seems impatient of a-  
ny long delay, ere hee wrought his feates, and  
therefore not tarrying vntill the Gospell of our Sa-  
uiour were generally planted and strongly rooted  
in mens hearts by the preaching of the apostles, hee  
very early began to sow his tares, where the Lords  
first husbandmen had cast in their good seed. Nay  
so diligent was the malice of Satan, in his hireling  
*Simon Magus*, the *Patriarch of hereticks*, that the  
*Apostles* were prevented, for as *Theodore* writ-  
eth when he had quitted Samaria, he trauelled into  
diuers parts, where the Apostles had not preached,  
forestalling as he went along the mindes of men,  
with his detestable impostures, that the doctrine of  
Apostolicall teachers, might wholly bee shut out,  
or enter with greater difficulty; now among his  
pestilentiall errors, that was one, as *Vincentius* testi-  
fieth, that God *the creator was author of the evils,  
euen of sinne*; an impiety which wanted not abet-  
tors in all ages; For besides *Simon*, *Cerdon*, *Mar-  
cion*, *Florinus* in the first times, and the *Mani-  
chees*, with the *Priscillianists*, afterwards, euen our  
present age hath afforded that impure sect of the  
*Libertines* fouly guilty that way. It is probable  
that some in the *Apostles* time had drunk of *Simons*  
cuppe, which might moue Saint *James* to giue ca-  
ueats



veats to his schollers, that they erre not in this point: Howsoever we deeme of the occasion, moving him to write, his admonition, is so much the waightier, the more grievous the error which hee speakes of, is: an error *primæ magnitudinis* of the biggest size. For if God be an author of, or a tempter to sinfull euill; if wee cannot bee content to say that he permits offences, but will haue him to necessitate them; if wee cannot rest satisfied with that truth, that God doth in his infinit wisdome make vse of the wicked wills of his creatures, to his owne glory, but wee will further say that hee makes their wills so wicked; if when men are read to be hardned by God, wee will pronounce that hee doth it, not only by withholding grace, but infusing mallice: if when wee speake of Gods concurring, with euery worke of his creature, wee will not distinguish the action it selfe from the obliquity, but promiscuously entitle God to both: Lord what confusion will there be in all things, let the pale betwixt iust and vniust, holy and prophane be pull'd downe! For if God sollicit and impell men to euill, when I sinne I sin not, for why should it be my fault to bee lead by God, nay this confounds God and the diuell making them all one; then which what more horrid blasphemy can be conceaued. And as for the attributes of God, which are indeed himselfe, not one of them can stand with any honor, if this error bee not demolished; for how is he goodnesse it selfe if such streames of euill doe flow from him, how is he all power when he is the parent of defects, and im-

Aug.

potencies? What iustice is it to punish those crimes which he himselfe makes, and plague in another his owne fault; and if he encline, yea driue a man to sinne, that so afterwards he may shew his mercy in remitting it, alas, as that father saith it is but a *malevolent good will* to make any one miserable to appeare himselfe mercifull. A more sacrilegious indignity against God cannot bee offered, then by this abominable error; nor is there any more pernicious to humane society. For it erects a prophane sanctuary for all offenders, euery one sheltring his iniquity, vnder the authority & patronage of God himselfe. There is in man a naturall humour not to owne his offences, and he is glad if he can translate them vpon another; this error affords the boldest shift, when it proposeth God the author of and mouer to sinns, none if this doctrine were currant, but would freely and riotously offend when they haue not fault, but necessity, yea diuine authority to charge in whatsoeuer they doe. This I speake to discouer the waight of the Apostles admonition, who giues warning in a matter of great importance, this error not only grating vpon, but casting downe the very foundation of all religion.

In locum.

But although our Apostle hath especiall reference to this one particular most impious error, yet there is no doubt, but as *Parauis* rightly comments, the admonition here giuen extends to our auoidance of all other soule errors about the doctrines of faith. For if wee bee vntought of this falsehood, there are besides this, many others, iniuri-  
ous



ous to God and dangerous to soules, wherewith it wee are likely to be tainted, our Apostles watchword is still in force. *Erre not my beloved brethren.* Let me then (taking my text in its iust latitude) enter into that, wherevnto I haue destinated my meditations, for this place and time; which is to lay downe a course how wee may recouer others and preferue our selues from errors in religion, that so this monitory speech of our Apostle may take effect among vs. And of this, as God, the hower, and your patience will permit.

Concerning our recouery of others faine into error, though herein much may bee said, yet in this scantnesse of time, it will be thriftiest for me, to obserue only our Apostles method herein, *first* wee must haue a care as well to instruct them, as condemne them, so doth Saint *James*; who together with his cry *Nolite errare*, vseth very powerfull arguments, drawne from the nature of God, and the true causes of sinne; whereby hee proues that God cannot be a tempter to euill, as reading the chapter you shall perceiue. And indeed it cannot be but a fruitlesse imperiousnesse to command a man not to erre & not teach him with all the folly of his error, & what reasons there are to withstand it; and here I cannot but dislike the course taken vp by some of our calling, who sometimes in the pulpet doe with greater eagernes of passion, inueigh against popish errors, then soundnesse of iudgement, and choice of arguments refute them; this rather advantageth then reformeth falshood; putting this frump into

our aduersaries mouths; wee see a will rather then a power in our opposits to convince vs of error, for we heare much noise, little reason; and who are they that we should credit them, vpon their bare words, and weake assertion only: but this is a fault most seene in the country, and therefore not to bee insisted on in this place.

A second direction is afforded from the courteous language of Saint *James* in our text; the matter which he confutes, comes not short of blasphemy, yet the Apostle abstaines from that harsher terme, and molifies that bad opinion into the gentler name of *error* and now hee calls from this error he salutes his schollers after a milde & louing manner, *Erre not beloued brethren*. If we could doe any good vpon others errors, this behauour is of all others the most winning; to come to the handling of our brethrens sores, with brotherly minds, full of loue and compassion. *A servant of the Lords*, especially he that doth the Lords service in freeing mens soules from error, Must be as Saint *Paule* describes him, *gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meeknesse instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will giue them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth*; and surely great reason we haue to shew humanity to humane errors; remembering how difficult a matter it is for poore ignorant men, so euery way beset with the snares of error, to escape all danger, yea not forgetting that wee our selues are but men, and may possibly haue as great staines, in our iudgement, as those wee

2 Tim. 2. 24. 25

would



would expunge in others; howsoever, by dealing with our brethren after a faire, & mild demeanour, wee shall render them more docile, and tractable, it being the nature of many to lend a more patient eare to those of whom they haue an opinion that they proceed in loue: the mind delights rather to follow then to be lead, and rather to be lead, then drawne, violence making it the more contumacious: it fares with him that hath put on error, as it did with him in the *Apoloag* whom the sunne fairely and serenely shining vpon, might haue wooed to cast off his cloake, which the blustering winde made him to keepe closer on, and surely there are some that if gently admonished will both reuerence their instructer, and embrace his advice, but if ouer roughly and smartingly handled, will rather be exasperated then reformed *facti sunt ingesta acrius veritate peiores*; they are made worse by a truth too too eagerly put vpon them. They seeme then smally acquainted with the discretion of admonishers, or condition of humane nature, who fly into the face of their erring brethren, with biting inuectiues, and rigorous punishments, as if it were all one to raile and convince, condemne and teach, or as if it were a brauer thing for Christians to imploy power then loue, in the correcting of their brethren; I speake not against the due punishment of men obstinate and irreclaimable, but that they may not bee so, I would haue all louing meanes first tryed to recall them; yea and when a severe stroke is giuen I would haue it inflicted with demonstra-

Salvian.

1 Cor. 5. 2.  
2 Cor. 2. 4.  
Histor. Confil.  
Trident.

Epist. 132. ad  
Florentinam.

monstration of vnfeined sorrow and loue, as the *primitive* Church did her censures with *much mourning*; as may bee gathered by *St Pauls* epistles with whom to *correct & lament* are synonymas as the iudicious writer of the *Trent* counfells history hath noted, who obserues farther, that in those times *the excesse of charity in correcting did make the corrector feeble greater paine then the corrected*; the proceedings of latter times, haue bin so harsh and feirce, that it may bee thought that some haue beene so far from greiuing at the errors of others, that rather they haue beene glad of them, especially if they bee such, the sedulous discovery & punishment whereof would as they hoped insinuate them into the fauours of the great ones of the world, men thus being more beholding to the errors of others, then their owne vertues for their preferments, or if this humour hath not tooke them, it is to be feared another hath; full of malignant vaine glory; while they somewhat reioice at the daily outbursting of error, that so they might haue worke, if not for their authority to vse the rod, yet for their learning to imploy the pen or tongue in confuting them. I thinke it a worthy worke to convince erroneous doctrines, and I hope this place will neuer want those, that shall performe it readily and solidly, but to desire errors to make ostentation of this skill, is a perverse ambition, voide of all brotherly charity, *non ut quod scimus doceamus aliorum ignorantiam optare debemus* saith *Austen*, to the end we may teach the world what wee know,  
wee



*wee may not wish for the ignorance or error of another.* But so much shall suffice for the course intimated in our Apostles proceeding, fit for vs to take in the recouering of others from their errors; how wee shall preferue our selues, it remaines to the prescribed.

Error is a sicknesse of the soule: and the chiefe part, at least the first degree of the cure, is to know and stop the fountaine of the disease. The causes of error are many; I will not touch vpon those which may craue the mercy of our excuse and pity, and which are now so incident to our nature, that they are past our avoidance; for it is a mischief sufficiently knowne and felt, that our first parent his inordinat and ambitious desire of ouerwide knowledge, brought himselfe, and his vnhappy posterity into the darke prison of ignorance; where lying, and God as *Dauid* sets it forth, looking downe from heauen vpon the children of men, to see if there were any that would vnderstand, he findes not one, they are all corrupt as in their wills so in their vnderstandings: hee that readeth the third to the *Romans* where this passage of *Dauid* is alleaged shall perceauie, that no fauourable *synecdoche* can saue any of the posterity of *Adam* from his epidemicall contagion: And although God the great Physition of soules, by his spirit, by his begotten word the sonne, and by that word which he put into the mouthes of his prophets, and Apostles, hath purged the minds of many of much ignorance, and made their vnderstanding more cleare and light-

*Psalm, 14. 2.*

*Rom. 3. 9. 11.*

Psal. 73. 17. 22.

1. Cor. 13. 9.

some; yet whether it bee that the disease, is too deeply rooted in our nature to bee driuen out vpon a sodaine, or whether it bee that God will haue some reliques thereof abide in vs, to containe vs within the bounds of humility, and doth not thinke it fit we should inioy all our happinesse at once: whatsoeuer the reason is, euen the best men doe often finde in themselves certaine grudgings of this malady. Not only they bewray their ignorance but their error, as *Dauid ingeniously confesseth that before he went into the sanctuary, the schoole of God, in a matter of no small importance, he was foolish and ignorant, and euen brutish before God.* The truth is (for an *Apostle* hath taught it) that in this life, *we know but in part*, and no wonder is it, if this penurious and incompleat knowledge leaue vs in the hands of diuers errors. But this naturall feeblenesse of the vnderstanding (although questionlesse it be the parent of sundry mistakes, I come to pittie not to lash; especially where there is a care to heale and strengthen such weaknesse of the minde, by those wholesome remedies which God hath prescribed; and there be no willing fomentation of, but all manly resistance against erroneous fancies; and if also since wee want the happinesse of being free from error and ignorance, wee want not the wisdom to bee sorry for our defects, and to pray for their forgiuenesse and couering in Christ.

The leaders into errors against which my discourse is specially bent, come forth not so much from



from the coasts of a naturally weake vnderstanding, as of some morally bad affections, which must be subdued or error will bee victorious. For that the affections are of great force, to sway the iudgement, wee need not marvaile, since the will is the most imperious faculty of the soule, & makes vse of the vnderstanding but as a counsellor; now as when a prince is strongly set vpon a thing, and is resolu'd to haue his owne way, the counsellors many times what for feare, what for loue; or very flattery are plyant inough to his purpose, and willingly suffer themselves, to be corrupted, that they may appeare serviceable; so when once the will is inordinately affected and mainely bent to that ill vpon which the affection is placed, it giues little leasure and no leaue to the vnderstanding to dissent from it; yea it dimms the eye of the soule, that it cannot discerne the truth, or fashions the sight to its owne wrong guise, when I read the story of *Sampson* I meet with no vnfit *Embleme* of this the affections dealing with the vnderstanding; *Dalilah* first allures the man to betray his owne strength and then puts him into the hands of his enemies; so doe the affections first emasculate the vnderstanding, and corrupt its abilities, and then deliuer it ouer into the hands of some dangerous falsehood. To the making good this point I suppose euery mans experience will afford euidence. For who cannot witnesse so much, that when his minde hath beene transported with the violence of some bad passion, or desire, hee hath conceiued so and so of

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things

Iud. 16. 16, 19.  
20.

things and hath beene somewhat eager in the maintenance of his conceit, who afterward, when this storme of passion is gone ouer, and the soule hath recouered her wonted tranquility and cleereneffe; obserues his mistake, changeth his opinion, and growes somewhat ashamed of his vnderstanding. Now if the suddaine vnruely commotions and wanton desires of the minde vitiat and rauish the vnderstanding, and beget diuers errors, how should not such be pestered with these mishapen bratts, in whom vnbridled sinfull affections keepe a standing court, and whose whole life is an habituated vitiousnesse. Nor is it nothing to our purpose, that wee may obserue those grand masters of error, the hereticks in all ages, for the most part haue beene ill mannered men, & such in whom the distempers either of the concupiscible or irascible part, of the soule, haue beene eminent. St Paule prophecyng of the *last perilous times* shewes *that men shall bee selfe amorous, couetous, boasters, what not*, & afterwarde declares that of this rotten timber should teachers of *falshood be made deceiuing, & being deceiued, resisting the truth, as Iannes and Iambres did Moses*: nor can I thinke that alwaies the heresies of these men did produce their vitiousnesse, but rather that the vitiousnesse of these men did thrust them vpon their heresies. They were *first men of corrupt mindes* and then *reprobate concerning the faith*, as the Apostle orders his description: and surely if wee take a list, of the present errors of the Church of Rome, which wee most condemne, it were

2 Tim. 3. 1. 2. 3.  
4. 5. 6. 8. 13.



were no hard matter to finde out their genealogy and shew that the greatest part of their false doctrines, and bad practises, come as it were out of the loines of couetousnesse, or ambition, or licentiousnesse. If then we would not fall backe into the same, or plunge our selues into as bad errors, wee must take heed of certaine vitious humors & affections, the accustomed originalls of false opinions in matters of religion, the chiefe whereof I shall name vnto you.

And first omitting to charge that naturall flatnes and dulnesse of spirit in some (which I had rather commiserat) there is a voluntary sluggishnesse and affected lazinesse of the minde, which cannot but expose a man to error; for since error easily followes an ignorance of the truth, and since truth doth commonly keepe so much state, as not to reueale her selfe to any but those who studiously seeke her; this slouthfull, and negligent sort of men must needs misse her, and fall into error, since they will not take the paines of diligent inquiry into things; there is naturally in all of vs a cloudines and foggy darknesse of ignorance, and nothing will so much thicken it, in our breasts, as this *παρρησία*, this spiritlesse, and languishing sloth of the minde: if the soule be of neuer so rich mettall, idlenesse will fennew and rust it, and make it vnseruiceable, in the warre we haue against error. Obserue the inclinations of these men, and see if they bee not worthy to be mistaken; out of a loue they haue to eate their owne vnderstanding, and to giue the powers, both

Isidor Pelusiat  
ep. lib. 3. cap. 191.

1 Theff. 5. 21.  
1 Ioh. 4. 1.

Minutius in  
Octavio.

of body and soule some rest; in the questions of religion, they accept them with ready faith, as they are stated by others, reputed learned, or as they are vulgarly held; as for that aduice of the *Apostle St Paule*, *proue all things, and hold that which is good*, or that of *St Iohn*, *try the spirits whether they are of God*, it is with them too cumbersome, and tedious a businesse; but while they giue this prone assent to assertions, and will not take the paines to examine them; while they thus haue made an absolute resignation of their iudgements, to the braines and faith of others, and thinke it reason inough to beleue, their elders in time, or betters in place, though they speake without reason; Lord whether will these be carried; into what pitte of error may they not quickly fall! Since it may be their lucke, not to meet, with the best leaders, and the leaders of these beare their faith along with them. To this mischief men are not alwaies subiect, whose capacities are not great, or whose vnderstanding is yet in its minority; but euen free and able men put themselues into the hazard, to liue the more easily and idly, *tadio investiganda penitus veritatis, cuilibet opinioni temerè potiùs succumbere malunt, quàm in explorando pertinaci diligentia perseverare*, as hee said not amiſſe in the dialogue of *Minutius Felix*. *out of a wearinesse to search deeply into truth, they had rather rashly I may say basely fall into the hands of any opinion, then perseveringly indure the paines, of a thorough enquiry*. But I dismiſſe these.

The next sort of men most obnoxious to error,  
are



are of a more elate and lofty spirit, *Simon Magus* comforts, that would haue himselfe thought to bee *some great one*, as it is in the acts, and all antiquity proclaimes his pride, a malady discovered by *St Paule*, in the sixth chapter of his first epistle to *Timothy*, and by *Saint Peter* in his secondepistle and second chapter thereof, in the false teachers, and seduced seducers of their time, and we may not wonder if the man that is possessed with the spirit of pride be carried into errors, if wee shall obserue his manners, and garbe a little. For first, whereas there is nothing that doth cast a sooner, or thicker mist before the vnderstanding, then an opinionate dotage vpon our selues, this arrogant man settis too high a price vpon himselfe, and his owne abilities; and whether his pride be conioined with ignorance or learning (as 'tis hard to say which is the more vnlucky coniunction) he is confident he erres not, and so indeed drawes neerer to error, the winde of pride hurting his eyesight; this man casts a scorne vpon whatsoeuer elder times, or riper iudgements can shew him, contrary to that which he hath conceited. *Nestorius* boasted *Sacram scripturam se primum, & solum intelligere*, he first and alone vnderstood the scriptures, and all other *Doctors* before him meere *Ignaroes*; hee deserued to erre, that would be wise alone. Thus a proud man, as if all the light were in himselfe, disdaines the society of other mens iudgements: of which branne are those of our times, with whom (saucily herein leuelling God with themselves) 1000 yeares are but as yeaster.

A&amp; 8. 9.

1. Tim. 6. 4.  
2 Pet. 2. 10.*Vincent. Lyrin.*  
cap. 42.

Ps. 90. 4.

*yeſterday*, no regard had by them to Godly antiquity, and the conſtant iudgement of the Church in the beſt ages thereof: and what may wee thinke of their ſpirit, by whom the moſt renowned diuines of our preſent times, to whom the happy reformation of our Church next vnder God is ſo much indebted are ſleighted and caſt off as *trio- bolar* writers. I doe not ſay but that there are blemiſhes of iudgement in the auntient, and errors may be found in our moderne worthies; and I account it a ſeruility v<sup>n</sup> worthy of free and generous Chriſtians, to mancipat our vnderſtandings to the iudgement of others, which may carry vs into errors as ſoone as any other thing, as I haue already noted: I onely call for ſo much modeſty, and good manners, that when wee perceau<sup>e</sup> a doctrine to bee generally receaued, by holy and learned men, in our owne and elder Churches, we take them along with vs in our inquiry after truth, and not haſtily breake from them, to follow our owne way vpon a preſumptuous conceit of our owne iudgements which we haue as much if not more reaſon to miſtruſt, as wee haue to miſdoubt other mens. Again<sup>e</sup> whereas naturall reaſon is but a blind & wandring guide in matters ſpiritual, this man is too ſtiſly addicted to the dictats thereof, it is a foule ſtaine of iudgement when a man conceiues that there are the ſame bounds of things naturall, & of his owne apprehenſion (for things may bee in themſelues, though they be not vnderſtood by vs) and it is an vneuen meaſuring, of a mans ſeſſe when hee ima-  
gins



gines there is the same latitude of his owne, and humane vnderstanding, as if hee knew as much as another can know; but folly is then enraged euen to blasphemy, when in an ouer proud indulgence to his owne wit, a man shall thinke that God were able to speake or doe nothing which he is not able to comprehend: of this giantlike presumption, was *Eunomius* of whom *Theodore*t reports that hee gaue out, *he had the same notice of God, as God had of himselfe* as if no odds were to bee put betwixt a finite, and infinite knowledge: for as *Lactantius* wisely saith: *Nihil inter deum hominemq; distaret, si consilia illa maiestatis eternae cogitatio assequeret humana*, there were no distance betwixt God & man, if humane cogitation could attaine vnto the counsailes of the eternall maiesty. And indeed while we extoll the soueraignty of our reason, we vnawares debase the dignity of that thing whereof reason is the teacher. For it can be no great matter which so narrow and shallow a thing, as humane vnderstanding left to his owne forces, can helpe vs to the knowledge of: nay it may sooner bee an error then a trifle. Adde hereunto that whereas an ill carriage of our selues towards the scriptures, (the rule of truth) is the readiest downefall into error: the proud person either vainely supposeth it cannot bee Gods word which exceeds his owne witt; or saucily murmures that God should challenge our assent; and giue vs not alwaies logicall demonstrations of what he saith (as if it were not inough for this supream legislator to pronounce a truth

*Heret. fabul.  
comp. cap. de  
Eunomio.*

*Lact. lib. i. c. i.*

or law vnlesse he argue it before the tribunall of our reason) or else he giues a faint credit to whatsoeuer crosseth his affection, or if he must needs interpret, he hath a will rather to wrest the scriptures to his opinion, then bend his opinion to the scriptures to impose his sence vpon the word, then fetch his sence from the word, as if he meant to lead, and not to follow the holy ghost; and these interpretations are for the most part made in hast, for hee takes it to bee a kinde of disparagement, to the nimblenesse of his witt to seeme to doubt, or deliberate long, and whiles hee makes more care to hasten then examine his opinion, he speedily pronounceth and as easily errs, for want of mature deliberation; there is one euill of pride more; (making way to error) not to be omitted, it is a studiouse of nouelty; I know not how the witt of man heated by pride, disdaines as a wretched thing, and a matter of no glory to tread in the steps of others, that haue gone before, and thus while wee are desirous to say what others haue not hit vpon, the imagination hunting and ranging about; some pretty and perhaps probable strange opinion is started vp before it, which it runns away with in very quick sent and great delight, we are marveilously favorable to our owne conceits, and although at first wee giue not any strong beleife vnto them, yet wee lend them many harty wishes that they were true; and with long well wishing, in time they come within the confines of some settled allowance, and at last passe into our vnmoueable assent; and now  
when



when all is done, the thing will be found to bee of more finenesse then strength, of more subtilty then truth: these are the perills of pride, if it bee ioined with learning, but if the proud spirited man is not conscicus of much learning, yet if hee findes some flashes of goodnesse, in himselfe, hee thinks that want abundantly supplied by certaine revelations of the spirit, whose great acquaintance he professeth himselfe to be, that now he thinkes that he hath arrived to an impeccancy of iudgement in matters spirituall: and (as *Vincentius* speakes of some, that boasted of the grace of the spirit *indiuinated to them*) that hee is ordered by God, that carried as it were by Angells hands, he can neuer dash his foot against any stone of error: but alas this is the pronest way to the wildest error, when euery outleaping & wantonnesse of fancy (as it happeneth among fanaticall enthusiasts) shall be reputed an inspiration and reuelation of the spirit: nor doth pride by so many waies lead into error, but which is worst; leaues the minde as a finall pray to it: for it makes the vnderstanding fierce and vntractable: every contradiction, euery affront from truth is reputed a contumely, the mishapen issue of the minde being borne must now bee kept; all retractations are basenesse, and dishonour; thus, that men may not seeme to be men, and to haue erred they are become hereticks: so contumacious a nurse of error is pride.

To pride in the third place let vs adioine as of neereft familiarity with it, the angry spirit of facti-

Cap. 37.

Rom. 2. 8.  
Iam. 3. 17.

on and contention, *to be contentious and not to bee obedient to truth*, are things coupled together by Saint Paul, and St James hath rightly obserued as *of enuy so of strife, where it is there is ἀκαταστάσια an vnsetled and tumultuous confusion, and euery euill worke*, the obseruation hath place, if wee apply it to the state of the soule, there cannot be but much confusion, and entercourse of error, where contention hath got in. Doe but obserue the men who know not how to hold any thing without passion, how oft they shame reason, to gratify their pettishnesse: if a question bee moued, which moues their choller with little or no choice they will crosse whatsoeuer you propole, their humor carrying them not so much to know as oppugne truth, against which if they can bee witty, it is a braue sufficiency; & when once in the rage of pride and anger, their error is marcht forth, it is a difficult matter to worke a retrait, and though you may conuince them, they will not bee perswaded; their fury will proceed in the brable, vntill they haue improved their brable into a heresy, this pettishnesse when it is sowed into malice, hath often carried some (who would bee at the most diametrall disagreement, with their aduersaries) not only to dissent from their persons, but their doctrines, even when they haue beene most sound and orthodox. And here let me giue warning, that in matter of religion, wee vse no inordinate hast in binding our iudgements to the opinions of others, whom either the fame of learning, or the greatnesse of place, or the



the neereneſſe of blood, or the likenefſe of manners or the ſweetneſſe of profit (all which haue great forces vpon the mind) hath wrought into our eſtimation; for this caſts vs into faction, wherein if a man be once imbarke'd, he will runne a hazard of erring, becauſe he hath leſt the guidance of reaſon, and is lead only by certaine preiudices, and anticipations borrowed from the perſons of men, which ſtrongly ſway which ſide ſoeuer bee taken. Laſtly I muſt report, as an occaſioner of ſome errors a too violent oppoſition of ſome errors: for ſince it cannot be denyed but that there are dangers on either hand of truth, and ſince it muſt be confeſſed, that truth hath not the good hap alwaies to meet with well aduiſed champions, it may poſſibly fall out, and vſually doth, that while they oppoſe ſome falſhoods with an extreame, and vnlimited deteſtation, while they take that to bee beſt in religion, which is at furtheſt diſtance from the error they come to oppugne, & while they are ouer impetuoſly carried to the ſlaughter of their aduerſaries opinions; in the ſeror of contentious zeale they fling themſelues into points euery way as erroneous as thoſe which they haue incountred; and ſo haue not leſt but changed a falſhood, and it may be to the worſe, and haue bene found *liers againſt God*, at leaſt *for him* which *Iob* blames.

*Iob. 13. 7.*

I haue done with the angrier part of the ſoule; ſhe hath her luſtfulneſſe alſo, as great an enemy to truth: let me then in the fourth place, indite couetouſneſſe, & ambition, who peruerſing the iudge-

Esay 56.11.

1 Tim 6.

Titus 1.11.

2 Pet. 2.14.15.

Isid. de script.  
eccli.

1. Tim. 6. 10.

Gen. 26. 15.

ment, must needs induce error; how many false visions did couetousnesse helpe the lying Prophets too of old? The preists in *Esaies* time were become shepheards that could not understand for they were as greedy as their doggs, they looked to their owne way, euery one for his owne gaine from his quarter. Who were they in the Apostles time, which corrupted, betrayed, forsooke the faith, but men who supposed gaine to be Godlinesse, and who were spotted with filthy lucre, as *St Paul* giues vs their character, those as *St Peter* saith, who had hearts exercised with couetous practises, right *Balaamites*; were the men who forsooke the right path and went astray, louing the wages of vnrighteousnesse. Euen that famous *Osius* of *Corduba* if *Isidore* charge him iustly, consented to the *Arrian* impiety, that in his olde age he might not loose those riches which he had got together in his youth; and certainly the feare of losing, the hope of gaining these temporall things hath so preuailed with many, that wee must conclude with holy *Paul*, the loue of money is the root of all euill, which while some coueted after, they haue erred from the faith, and peirced themselves (I am sure the Church of God) through with diuers sorrowes. And indeed I see not how truth can be thought vpon in the dust, and noise, of worldly imployments, or grow vp amidst the choaking thornes of worldly cares: how can the breasts of men be wells of the pure and liuing water of truth, when couetous lusts, as so many *Philistins* haue stopt them vp and filled them with earth



*earth*. A worldling already hath admitted, that grand error into his heart, that *riches is the soue-  
raigne good*, from which *idolatry*, a man may quick-  
ly slip into any heresy that will sort with it, such a  
muck worne considers not what is true, but what  
is profitable: nay such a man feares some truth as  
much as a theife, least it come forth to take his purse,  
and lessen his heap. The like accusation is to bee  
framed against *Ambition*, for let a man inordinatly  
affect worldly grace or preferment, if hee cannot  
thrive in the way of truth, his discontented and re-  
uengefull heart, will turne ouer vnto such opinions,  
which may bee professed with better preferment.  
Besides the men that study preferment, are of a  
very supple and plyant vnderstanding, and can be-  
leeue at the pleasure of another, at the disposition  
of him, who disposeth of the dignities hee expects;  
as if he had lost his owne soule and were wholly  
actuated with the soule of his *Mecenas*. In the  
meane while *how can ye beleene as our sauiour told*  
*the Iewes which receaue honour one of another and*  
*seeke not the honour which cometh from God alone*,  
how can a man alwaies thinke aright that must  
thinke as the *grandees*, who oft are as great in crime  
as place, will haue him. The Apostle hath a text,  
perhaps misread, doubtlesse misvnderstood by the  
*Eceboliuses* of our age who are too oft found *καὶ οὕτω*  
*δουλεύοντες* when it should bee *καὶ οὕτω* *seruing not the*  
*Lord but the time*, and that in the most reprobate  
sence of the phrase; for they obserue not the sea-  
son (as the Apostle might meane) wherein they  
might

Col. 3. 5.

Ioh. 5. 44.

Rom. 12. 11.  
vide stephani  
lecti. varias.

Gal. 6. 12.  
Acts. 15. 1.

might best doe good, but whereby they might bee most great, by applying themselves to the humors of those, who if soothed, are likeliest to preferre. Ere I altogether dismisse this point, let me touch an euill, neere of kinne to ambition & as dangerous to truth: Certaine popular men there are, such as those *false Apostles* in the dayes of the truth, who would haue *blinded* the religion of *Christ* with the *ordinances* of *Moses* and *superadded circumcision to baptisme* perhaps that both Iew and Gentile might be pleased; such as these I say there are, who to gaine good estimation with different sects, giue faire quarter to all opinions; and these commonly talke of reconciling religions, and composing of controversies, that all may goe away contented. I know it is a commendable indeuour of Godly men, to seeke the vnion of Christian churches; and let them be detested, who by needlesse strifes & exasperations, make the rents of the Church wider: those I here intend, who loue their owne fame, more then peace, and peace more then truth: which they care not how they pare to the quicke, that they may gaine the applause of moderate and well tempered men.

1 Tim. 1. 19.

2 Pet. 2. 1. 2. 10.  
14. 19.

In the fift and last place we are to brand a licentious and dissolute life, with the stile of *corruptor of the faith*, some putting away a good conscience (which inferrs the leading a bad life) *concerning the faith*, haue made shipwracke saith St Paul, and St Peter reports of the bringers in of damnable heresies that they had their pernicious, or as some bookes



bookes lasciuious waies, that they walked after the flesh in the lusts of uncleannesse; that they had eyes full of adultery and that could not cease from sinne, great promisers of liberty to others they themselves being the servants of corruption, as the Apostle largely describes their manners: Now such as these hauing hearts already full of sensuality, there is no roome for heavenly contemplations of chaste truth; whatsoeuer vigor, and cleerenesse and intentiuenesse of the mind, is requisite to the right discerning of things, the very strength of the soule, is lost in the armes of *Dalilah*; frugality & sobriety (the sinewes of a sound iudgement) are loosed; besides there are not any of those holy and seuerer truths in Gods word but these men wish and long they were false, and a little matter will improue a wish into a beleefe, *quod volumus facile credimus*; as on the contrary he is apt to take those doctrines to be true which are indulgent to his darelign vices; he would faine sinne with some warrant, that hee may pacify fame abroad, and conscience at home if it were possible; *natura hominis procliuus in vitia vult non modo cum veniâ sed cum ratione peccare*, saith *Lactantius* and therefore he sedulously hunts after and would gladly finde out some doctrines vnder whose protection he may offend, in this pursuite euen the passages of scriptures are serched into by some, to see what patronage they will afford to their intemperances, that so they may securely inioy the pleasure of ill deeds; making that their poyson which is appointed to be their medicine.

H

Thus

Lib. 4 c.

Prov. 1. 7.

John. 7. 17.

Aug. ep. 30.  
Socrates.

1 Joh. 2. 20.

Thus haue I (Fathers and brethren) as breifely as so many particulars would permit, shewed that they are our morrall evils to which wee may lay most of our errors in matters of religion; that wherein I should now enlarge my selfe, but cannot (vnlesse I should trespasse to much vpon your patience) is, that for the avoidance of error wee would all of vs study true piety, which standing in the *fear of God*, must needs be the *beginning of saueng wisdom*; this feare it being grounded in loue, will make you still haue an eye to your fathers will: and *if a man will doe the will of my Father* saith his son *he shall know of the doctrine whether it bee of God*: now the will of God is, that you bee industrious, humble, peaceable, moderate in your desires, religious in your liues, and euery way contrary to the misbehauored men which I haue set before you: bee thus and the victory against error may soonest be atchiued; sooner a great deale, then by all the provisions of naturall witt, or secular learning. One of the heathens had this speech, *Quibus satis persuasum ut nihil mallent esse quam viros bonos his reliqua facilis est doctrina*: so may I say diuine knowledge will easily impart it selfe to such, who can be perswaded to desire to be nothing so much as true hearted Christians, and can be content to be guided by Gods spirit, for such *haue the vntion* whereof St *John* speakes, *and shall know all things*, all things meet for such knowledge, and seruice of God here, as shall make them partakers of his sight and glory hereafter. David giues euery good man  
great.



great assurance when he asketh, *what man is hee  
that feareth the Lord, and subioynes ; him shall hee  
teach the way that he shall choose, & who is lead by  
God is out of the road of destroying error. O lord,  
by thy word and spirit guide vs all here present,  
by thy sonne, who is the truth, bring vs to thy sonne  
who is the life; and that it may please thee  
to bring into the way of truth all others*

Ps. 25. 12.

*that haue erred & are deceiued we*

Lament.

*beseech thee to heare vs good*

*Lord; to whom all praise*

*and glory bee ascri-*

*bed now and*

*euer.*

FINIS.

